APPENDIX

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Reports on the Meeting of the ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN HISTORIANS Washington, D.C., April 5-8, 1972

The **Organization of American Historians** held its 65th annual meeting at the Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C., April 5-8. The registered attendance of 3,000 people was the largest on record. On the program were 43 sessions, six luncheons, seven workshops, a business meeting, and a general meeting for the presidential address.

The meeting contrasted sharply with the last previous meeting in Washington of a major historical association, the 1969 meeting of the American Historical Association, at which controversies over such current issues as the Vietnam war, the Black Panthers, and the Chicago Eight disrupted and prolonged several functions. The OAH meeting of 1972 reflected the historians' continued interest in social and political problems of the day but also revealed that most of them preferred, in their roles as historians, to deal with such problems as subjects of historical analysis rather than as causes for political action by the organization. Among the topics of discussion were women, blacks, Chicanos, Indians, and ecology. The workshops, which were new to the Association's program, were devoted to methodology in teaching and writing. [*Oliver H. Orr*]

At a session on Thursday morning, April 6, entitled "The Formative Years of Black America," Peter H. Wood, Harvard University, gave a paper on the question of cultural baggage brought with the African slave to the New World. Of particular interest is the familiarity the imported slave seemed to have had with rice culture, as evidenced by the numbers that were enslaved going to or from rice fields in Africa. This would indicate that the slave was not a passive, ignorant laborer but that he came to America with particular skills that were useful in developing American agriculture. Winthrop Jordan, University of California at Berkeley, pointed out that viewing the problem through the eyes of the slave (the sources were primarily interviews with slaves) rather than the white's perception, added a much-needed dimension to work in this area. [*Pam van Ee*]

As might have been expected, because of the present dearth of employment opportunities in the academic area, a panel discussion on Friday morning, April 7, devoted to "Non-Teaching Careers in History" was very well attended. Patricia M. Fox, Harvard University Press and formerly an editor of the *American Historical Review*, discussed various types of careers in editing, with emphasis on positions with university presses.

James C. Olson, University of Missouri, Kansas City, suggested that historians should investigate the wide range of administrative positions that are associated with museums, historical societies, and other organizations and institutions having an historical orientation.

James B. Rhoads, Archivist of the United States, in addition to describing the employment situation in his own agency, pointed out that there are between 2,000 and 3,000 other archival repositories in the United States that utilize, or could utilize, historians for much of their staffing. Included among these repositories are state and municipal archives, college and university archives, and business archives.

William M. Tackett, a representative of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., indicated that publishing houses, particularly those having a college textbook division, have a need for people with backgrounds in history and the humanities in their sales and editorial departments.

Robert M. Utley of the National Park Service presented the overall picture of the historian's place in the Federal Government. In the Government the emphasis is, of course, on research and writing, and most of the agencies prefer to hire young Ph.D.'s or those with master's degrees and train these historians in keeping with the special requirements of the individual agency or office.

A long and spirited period of open discussion followed, during which it became clear that, although the non-teaching careers in history may be many, varied, interesting, and rewarding, at the present time they are similar to the teaching careers in that the demand for positions far exceeds the supply.

[*John McDonough*]

"Conflict and Social Control in Early American Communities" was the title of a Friday morning session at which Paul S. Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, argued in "The Social Origins of Salem Witchcraft" that the witchcraft outbreak was a reaction to economic shifts in Essex County and that the accusers and accused were sharply divided geographically, religiously, and in economic outlook—rural versus urban and commercial farming. William R. Tillman, University of California, Los Angeles, spoke on "Party Spirit in Northampton, Massachusetts, 1654-1776." The most basic issue, Mr. Tillman said, was the common land, its use and division. Factionalism dominated Northampton up to 1756, but the maturing of society brought about a consensus in Northampton on the eve of the Revolution. Michael Zuckerman, University of Pennsylvania, commented stressing the lack of conflict in colonial Massachusetts.

[*Gerald W. Gawalt*]

A workshop on Friday at noon was devoted to "The Historian's Use of Illustrative Material." The first speaker was Thomas Cripps, Morgan State College, whose topic was "Early Films and Television." With special reference to urban, ethnic, and black studies, Mr. Cripps demonstrated a television program he had taped by using materials from many different sources and combining them with his own commentary.

Sandra L. Myres, University of Texas at Arlington, spoke on the use of three dimensional objects in the classroom and urged that they be used to supplement written documents. John J. Appel, Michigan State University in East Lansing, talked about cartoons as historical documents and accompanied his remarks with color slides of cartoons from late 19th- and early 20th-century American magazines. Clifford Snyder of the Winston Press outlined the difficulties of producing films suitable for college history classes within the technical and economic framework of today.

The four speakers were followed by several short presentations from the audience, all related to the use of visual material in the teaching of history.

[*Mrs. Renata V. Shaw*]

The well-attended workshop on "Archival and Manuscript Sources for the Study of Women's History" also met at Friday noon. The panelists submitted surveys of archival and manuscript sources in two printed compilations, *Archival and Manuscript Resources for the Study of Women's History: A Beginning*, by Robert Asher, Mari Jo Buhle, Charlotte Davis, Ellen DuBois, Andrea Hinding, Mary Lynn McCree, Roberta Balstad Miller, and Joan Hoff Wilson, and *Women in American History, 1896-1920: Their Manuscripts in the Library of Congress*, by Roy R. Thomas.

It was suggested that studies be undertaken utilizing the various records and collections in repositories throughout the United States. The more frequently suggested topics emphasized the role of women in the context of society rather than the traditional subjects of suffrage, reform, or great women. Copies of the printed surveys are available from Clarke A. Chambers, Director, University of Minnesota Libraries, and Roy R. Thomas, Assistant Professor of History, Bowie State College, Bowie, Md. 20715.

[*Mrs. Carolyn H. Sung*]

"Politics and Constitutional Debate in the Early Republic" was the theme of a Friday afternoon session at which Richard E. Ellis, University of Virginia, author of a recent book on judicial reform during the Jeffersonian era, presented a paper entitled "The Transformation of the States-Rights Argument, 1776-1833." Mr. Ellis argued that the states rights issue was first used by the anti-Federalists and Jeffersonians to defend majority rights but that Federalists and southern nullifiers transformed the doctrine to a defense of minority interests. He emphasized the role of the Federalists in transforming states rights to a "secessionist doctrine." Arthur Bestor, University of Washington, and Paul C. Nagel, University of Missouri, Columbia, commented on Mr. Ellis' paper

[*Gerald W. Gawalt*]

The Friday afternoon session on "American Colonial Society: Migration and Wealth," pertained to current work being done in quantitative social history. The first paper, "The Character of Early Massachusetts Immigration," by T. H. Breen, Northwestern University, and Stephen Foster, Northern Illinois University, discussed two ships' passenger lists of 1637. The passengers were emigrating from England to Massachusetts, and by digging through the sources, Messrs. Foster and Breen traced the careers of many immigrants from the time before leaving England until after their arrival in the New World. The transferability of social status, the motivation for the move, the choice of New England at a time when the Netherlands were approximately four times more popular a destination, and the social mobility of these individuals in America were some of the questions

that the study raised and discussed. The use of personal histories to fill out the bare statistics made the paper unusually interesting listening. [*Pam van Ee*]

In the years immediately following his Presidency, Harry S. Truman was widely praised by historians for his effective exercise of executive power, especially in the field of foreign policy. The Marshall Plan, aid to Greece and Turkey, and NATO were cited as major contributions to the containment of Communism and the building of situations of strength in the free world. A poll of historians conducted by Arthur Schlesinger rated Truman a "near great" President.

Within the last few years a new school of historians has rendered a much less favorable interpretation of the Truman Presidency. At a Friday afternoon panel on "Harry S. Truman and the Historians," Robert Griffith of the University of Massachusetts, in a paper titled "Truman and the Historians: The Reconstruction of Postwar American History," analyzed at some length the so-called revisionist theories of Truman's seven years in the White House.

The essence of the revisionist case is that Truman's hard line policies vis a vis the Soviet Union were largely responsible for the Cold War. Moreover, they contend, on the domestic side, Truman had a bad record on civil rights and his tough stand in the external realm helped to create a climate conducive to McCarthyism. A comment prepared by Barton J. Bernstein, Stanford University, and read by a colleague, also presented this view of the Truman years.

In a rejoinder, Alonzo L. Hamby, Ohio University attempted to put the Truman administration in better prospective. He criticized the revisionists for taking an oversimplified view of the intentions of the Soviet Union, and for judging past decisions apart from the circumstances of the time. It is clear that the Truman Presidency will continue to be a subject of debate among historians. For a fuller study and evaluation of this period, however, much more documentary evidence must become available. [*Paul T. Heffron*]

Eagerness to reexamine the nature of the historian's task and to facilitate historical research and writing was strongly manifested in the Business Meeting on Friday afternoon. Discussing the contracted job market, Executive Secretary Thomas D. Clark stressed the need to reappraise the historian's profession and to envision new channels of accomplishment. He noted that history is being reduced in importance in schools and colleges and emphasized the necessity for reviewing the manner in which history is taught. He also reported that an index to the first 50 years of *The Journal of American History* is being prepared.

Stanley L. Swart, representing the Professional Caucus, an independent group, introduced a resolution urging the American Historical Association to extend its role as a professional organization, setting standards for teaching loads, class size, and other areas of the teaching historian's professional responsibilities. This resolution was adopted after modification to take the form of a petition requesting the Executive Board of the OAH to work toward the formation of a joint committee with the AHA to deal with professional standards.

Anne F. Scott, Chairman of the Committee on the Status of Women in the Historical Profession, offered evidence of significant progress in behalf of women. She announced that a future issue of *The Journal of American History* will be devoted entirely to the history of the status of women, and also reported that women candidates for teaching positions are currently given preference over men to such an extent that her committee intends to consider the possibility that a reverse discrimination has developed.

The announcement was made that the membership of the OAH had elected T. Harry Williams of Louisiana State University as president and John Higham of The Johns Hopkins University as vice president for the coming year. [*Oliver H. Orr*]

A Saturday morning session on "The Origins of Appellate Review" presented William E. Nelson, University of Pennsylvania, who discussed "State Appeals to Federal Courts in the Early Republic"; he emphasized the difficulty in working out jurisdictional questions and the efforts to have Federal courts review cases originating in State courts. Efforts of lawyers to win cases provided much impetus to Federal appellate powers. The paper of D. B. Swinfen, University of Dundee, Scotland, compared the Supreme Court of the United States and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in their political roles. Mr. Swinfen was chiefly concerned with the mixing of judicial and political purposes. Morton Horowitz, Harvard University, provided a comment on the papers. [*Gerald W. Gawalt*]